

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

I. Introduction:

Applicants acknowledge the allowance of claims 1-7 and 14-18.
Reconsideration of the rejection of claims 8-13 is respectfully requested.

II. Interview Summary:

Examiner Dwayne Handy contacted the undersigned attorney on June 14, 2006 with a proposal to allow the case if applicants would agree to cancel claims 8-13. Applicants' attorney requested an Office Action detailing the Examiner's new rejection of claims 8-13.

The courteous personal interview granted applicants' attorney, Jamie Ackley on July 7, 2006 by Examiner Handy is hereby respectfully acknowledged. The arguments presented in the interview are set forth below. Examiner Handy agreed to remove the rejection of claims 8-10, 12, and 13 over U.S. Patent No. 6,537,500 (Brenner et al.) and the rejection of claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. 112, once the applicants submit the arguments in a written response.

III. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. 112:

In rejecting claim 11, the Examiner stated that it is unclear how the check valves may be in the cover of the batch reactor. The check valves may be, for example, located within passageways formed in the cover and positioned between the pressure chamber and reaction wells (see, for example microvalves of Fig. 17). In one embodiment a plate 1610, such as shown in Fig. 16, may be part of the cover 1634 (e.g., integrally formed in the cover or attached thereto).

Claim 11 is therefore believed to be in compliance with 35 U.S.C. 112.

IV. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 8-10, 12, and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,537,500 (Brenner et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,190,619 (Kilcoin et al.).

Brenner et al. disclose a flow through reactor used for the detection of a product in the discharge of a catalytic material. As shown in Fig. 1, a test unit includes a body 6 having a plurality of drill holes 7. Channels 8 extend from openings 7 to the underside of the body. A porous plate 21 is positioned at the underside of the body adjacent to the open ends of channels 8. Also located at the underside of the body is a bottom 22 having a drill-hole 23 through which reaction gas, which flows away from channels 8 through plate 21, can be conveyed away.

Brenner et al. do not show or suggest a parallel batch reactor or a flow restriction device comprising a plurality of check valves, as set forth in claims 8-13.

Kilcoin et al. do not overcome the deficiencies of Brenner et al. The apparatus of Kilcoin et al. provides individually sealable reaction vessels. There is no common pressure chamber in communication with a plurality of reaction wells. Furthermore, the caps of Kilcoin et al. are used to vent the wells at the same time the vessels are being filled. Thus, the caps are configured to expose the vessels to an inlet and a vent in the open position. If a common pressure chamber were somehow connected to the inlet passageway, the vessels would not hold pressure since each vessel is also open to a vent and the caps would not be configured to allow flow from the pressure chamber into one or more of the reaction wells and restrict flow from the one or more reaction wells into the pressure chamber.

Accordingly, claims 8-13 are submitted as patentable over Brenner et al. and Kilcoin et al.

V. Conclusion:

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and should be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would in any way expedite the prosecution of the application, please do not hesitate to call the undersigned at (408) 399-5608.

Respectfully submitted,



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